

# South Dakota National Guard

## Public Affairs Office

Phone: 605-737-6721 Email: [ng.sd.sdarng.list.pao@mail.mil](mailto:ng.sd.sdarng.list.pao@mail.mil) Web: [sd.ng.mil](http://sd.ng.mil)



### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

June 24, 2016

## **Realistic scenarios bolster firefighter training**

By Spc. Carl Johnson – 129th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

ELLSWORTH AIR FORCE BASE, S.D. – Soldiers from the South Dakota Army National Guard's 451st and 216th Engineering Detachments, Airmen from the 28th Civil Engineering Squadron and members of the Ellsworth Fire Department trained together on multiple elements of firefighting at two locations at Ellsworth Air Force Base, June 22.

Soldiers and Airmen learn firefighting skills as part of their initial military training. Staying up to date on those skills requires constant practice.

"It is great to be able to use the facilities at Ellsworth," said Sgt. 1st Class Austin Hagen from the 216th. "The structures are designed for the type of training we need to complete. We also get to practice working with other services and agencies. It's a win-win situation."

In crews of two, the firefighters began the day by clearing smoke filled rooms and checking for people that may have been trapped. As teams they worked quickly and efficiently to complete the task safely.

In the second scenario, the crewmembers had to find their way out of the building alone. The firefighters used the fire hose as trail to get back to the exit. Distinct bumps on the couplings of the fire hose allowed the firefighters to determine which direction to go.

"Seconds are critical," said Army Sgt. Sean Fischer of the 451st. "Having an excellent understanding of the equipment you are working with can save not only your life, but the guy next to you as well."

Each fire crew works hard to prepare for the worst, but a large part of the firefighters' duties center around fire prevention.

"The potential for a fire is always high," said Chief Warrant Officer Terry Hoey, commander of 451st and the 216th. "We have to inspect everything. We are always prepared should the need arise."

The preparation for the second scenario of the day involved a brief on the upcoming structure burn. Leadership made sure each firefighter was aware of possible hazards and made sure that each unit understood their responsibilities.

"Fighting a fire is all about the team," said Aaron Wilke a firefighter for the Ellsworth Fire Department. "If everyone is working together and knows what to do and where to be, it will be a successful mission."

After the briefing, the crewmembers loaded the structure burn training facility with timber pallets and set them on fire. The temperature inside rose over 400 degrees. Crews of two were sent in to extinguish the fire.

-more-

“It is important to spray the water on the fire properly,” said Fischer. “If the water is sprayed in a wide pattern first, it will hit the walls and ceiling creating steam.

“Steam creates more heat,” added Fischer. “More heat can be deadly.”

After each team had fought the blaze, the crew began the cleanup process. Despite the dangers and the exhausting work, firefighters have a deep sense of pride in the work they do.

“My dad is a pilot,” said Senior Airmen Brandon Malfer of the 28th CES. “He said he owes his life to paramedics and firefighters.”

-30-

High resolution photos are available at [www.flickr.com/photos/southdakotationalguard](http://www.flickr.com/photos/southdakotationalguard)



**160622-Z-FO002-581:** U.S. Army Spcs. Kyle Bryant and Geoff Stoltenberg of the 451st and 216th Engineer Detachments, South Dakota Army National Guard, prepare to search smoked filled rooms for simulated fire victims as part of their training during the 32nd Golden Coyote training exercise at Ellsworth Air Force Base, S.D., June 22, 2016. The training helps firefighters prepare for situations they may encounter while deployed. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Carl Johnson/Released)



**160622-Z-FO002-628:** U.S. Army Spc. Kyle Bryant of the 451st and 216th Engineer Detachments, South Dakota Army National Guard, follows a hose line in order to find the exit as part of the 32nd Golden Coyote training exercise at Ellsworth Air Force Base, S.D., June 22, 2016. The training helps firefighters prepare for situations where they have low visibility and need to work by feel alone. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Carl Johnson/Released)



**160622-Z-FO002-220:** Senior Airman Brandon Malfer, 28th Civil Engineering Squadron, U.S. Air Force, prepares to fight a blaze as part of firefighter training conducted during the 32nd Golden Coyote training exercise at Ellsworth Air Force Base, S.D., June 22, 2016. Firefighters from the Air Force, South Dakota Army National Guard and the Ellsworth Fire Department trained together on how to properly extinguish a structure fire. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Carl Johnson/Released)



**160622-Z-FO002-256:** Soldiers from the 451st and 216th Engineer Detachments, South Dakota Army National Guard, Airmen from the 28th Civil Engineering Squadron and members of the Ellsworth Fire Department extinguish a structure fire after completing training at Ellsworth Air Force Base, S.D., June 22, 2016. The training was a part of the 32nd Golden Coyote training exercise. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Carl Johnson/Released)



**160622-Z-FO002-049:** Soldiers from the 451st and 216th Engineer Detachments, South Dakota Army National Guard, roll up a fire hose after completing training at Ellsworth Air Force Base, S.D., June 22, 2016. Firefighters from the Air Force, South Dakota Army National Guard and Ellsworth Fire Department trained on room clearing and structure burn exercises as part of the 32nd Golden Coyote training exercise. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Carl Johnson/Released)

**FOR MORE INFORMATION** contact Capt. Amber Symonds at (605) 737-6969 or cell (605) 639-5147, e-mail [amber.a.symonds.mil@mail.mil](mailto:amber.a.symonds.mil@mail.mil).